DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 288 298 EC 200 769

AUTHOR	Gordon, Elizabeth; Zamule, Elisabeth
TITLE	Vocational Programs for the Mentally Retarded in Allegheny County: A Study of Selected Sheltered Workshops and High School Programs. Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Health and Welfare PLANNING Association, Pittsburgh, PA.
PUB DATE	Dec 86
NOTE	66p.; Funded by a grant from the Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust. Executive Summary printed on colored paper.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Basic Education; Career Choice; High Schools; Job Placement; *Job Training; *Mental Retardation; *Sheltered Workshops; Special Classes; Special Schools; *Vocational Education; Vocational Schools; Vocational Training Centers; Work Experience Programs
IDENTIFIERS	Allegheny County Schools PA; Goodwill Industries of America; Parc Way; Supplemental Security Income Program; Work Activity Centers

ABSTRACT

This report discusses sheltered workshop programming and high school-level vocational training for mentally retarded (MR) individuals in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Sheltered workshops conducted by Goodwill Industries and Parc-way Industries were examined to determine client characteristics and the rate of placement in competitive employment. The opportunities for high-school level mentally retarded students included: programs within Pittsburgh high schools, programs at Pittsburgh's center for the more severely handicapped, vocational courses at special education centers, in-school paid job experience, co-op work involving paid jobs in the community, work activity centers, and area vocational-technical schools. Conclusions were that sheltered workshops need to increase business, improve client placement into competitive work, provide programming for more people, foster communication among workshops, and make efforts to restructure Supplemental Security Income benefits for workshop employees. Concerning the high school vocational programs, the study recommended increasing the number of mentally retarded students taking vocational courses, developing additional courses suited to MR students, and studying the effect of high school-level vocational training on adult careers. Appended are lists of vocational courses offered by the school system, a list of area high schools with programs for MR students, and a bibliography. (JDD)

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VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY: A STUDY OF SELECTED SHELTERED WORKSHOPS AND HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

FINAL REPORT

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VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED
IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY: A STUDY OF SELECTED SHELTERED
WORKSHOPS AND HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

FINAL REPORT

Executive Summary

The 1986 research project in mental retardation builds on previous work on youngsters in transition funded by the Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust. This year we have taken a closer look at sheltered workshop programming and high school level vocational training for mentally retarded individuals in Allegheny County. This work has involved surveying written materials, interviewing staff, analyzing data and visiting sites throughout the county. Our work has lead to the following observations:

Sheltered Workshops

Client Characteristcs and Placement Information: The agencies studied were Goodwill and Parc-way, who tend to serve lower functioning mentally retarded individuals. The majority of clients in the workshop programs of these agencies perform at less than 50% of normal production levels. Characteristics of clients delineated, and aspects of placement discussed, include:

- Clients live predominantly with their families or in Community Living Arrangements (CLAs).

- Clients range in age from 20 to 68. Mean age at Parc-way is 35; at Goodwill 37.

- The average client of both agencies entered the workshop program in 1978, and so has been there 8 years.

- The long-range goal for over 50% of clients is identified as being a sheltered workshop. A considerable minority are seen as eventually being placed in competitive employment.

- Small numbers of clients have been placed in competitive employment in recent years.

- Both agencies are placing increased emphasis on placement of MR clients. Both are interested in supported work as an approach to placement.

- Each agency identifies a number of obstacles to placement. These include reluctance of clients and families to have clients move out of workshops, difficulty in opening positions with industry and the paucity of job specialists.

Issues: Sheltered workshops are currently grappling with a number of interrelated issues that will prove critical to the nature of their programming, clients and customers. They are as follows:

Issue 1: Movement out of workshops and their ultimate function.

Issue 2: The place of sheltered workshops in the continuum of rehabilitative services.

Issue 3: Striking a balance between business and rehabilitation aspects of the program.

Issue 4: Ways of effectively marketing workshop services.

Issue 5: Lack of differentiation between Work Activity Center and workshop.

Issue 6: The appropriate use of down time.

Issue 7: Need for more places and the issue of retirement.

High School Vocational Programs for Mentally Retarded Students

A variety of vocational programs were found to be available in the county for mentally retarded students. Some of the opportunities include:

- Programs within city high schools. EMR students take courses with other non-handicapped students, with the support of the counselors and teachers of Project Liaison. 70% of EMR students in city high schools are in vocational courses.

- Programs at the city's special center for more severely handicapped. Program areas include production, food service, maintenance and clerical/assembly.

- Vocational courses at the 6 special education centers run by the AIU. Areas include food service, auto mechanics, distributive education and building and grounds maintenance. Students based at the centers, as well as those mainstreamed in district high schools, take part in these courses on a half day basis.

- In-school work at the special education centers. Students get paid job experience as teachers' helpers, food servers, maintenance staff and messengers.

- Co-op work. Retarded students in higher grades work at real jobs in the community. These are paid positions at such places as fast food restaurants, motels, and retail stores.

- Licensed Work Activity Centers for the lower functioning students. The 6 special education centers each have a WAC which operates as closely as possible to an adult WAC program. Students are paid on a piecework basis, and are prepared for entry in WACs after 21.

- Area Vocational-Technical Schools (AVTSs). Increasing numbers of handicapped students are attending 1/2 day programs at the county's 4 AVTSs. Learning facilitators are assigned to assist special education students with their vocational programming, by speaking with teachers, modifying class material and assisting with tests. At the AVTS visited, a number of programs developed especially for disabled students were noted.

Discussion and Recommendations

The exploration into the vocational programs lead to a number of conclusions and recommendations in respect to both sheltered workshop and high school vocational programs. These include:

Sheltered Workshops

1) Increasing business in the workshops.

2) Improving placement of clients into competitive work.

3) Providing more places for people who are currently without programming.

4) Fostering communication and consultation between workshops.

5) The issue of SSI benefits.

High School Vocational Programs

1) Increasing the numbers of mentally retarded students taking vocational courses.

2) Developing additional course areas especially suited to mentally retarded students.

3) Undertaking follow-up to determine the effect of high school-level vocational training on adult careers.

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Bibliography

Introduction

The research project in mental retardation undertaken by HWPA in 1986 builds on previous work on mentally retarded youngsters in transition in Allegheny County. Last year's research was directed at developing an overview of the situation of these youngsters and presented a general description of the systems with which they are involved, and the interface between these systems. The present effort looks at two of these systems in greater detail. The first aspect involves a focus on sheltered workshop programs for the mentally retarded. The second entails a closer look at high school level vocational programs for mentally retarded students. The current effort then, has enabled us to gain a greater depth of insight into these two critical systems impinging on the lives of mentally retarded youngsters in transition.

The methods used in the current study were aimed at collecting data which would enable us to understand these systems at a number of levels. The literature was reviewed to determine current trends and findings in respect to MR programming in these areas. Interviews with people of many types, both in person and by telephone, proved a valuable resource for understanding the subtle workings of the systems that were not written down or otherwise available. These individuals' insights, concerns, and hopes for the future of mental retardation programming guided our undertaking and helped us to appreciate issues as they are lived by service providers. These individuals also supplied us with information on numbers, and characteristics of students and clients participating in programs, generally accommodating our requests for data. This data was, at times, compiled specifically for us. We appreciated their efforts, as, due to concerns for confidentiality, we were not able to access records ourselves, but rather relied on the willingness of program staff to take the time to compile statistics. We also obtained any written materials - brochures, reports, etc - that were available on the vocational programs and sheltered workshops.

An important aspect of the methodology of the study was field visits to program sites which equipped us with unique insights into the atmosphere of programs, characteristics of clients and interactions of personnel, that would not otherwise have been possible. We visited in-school vocational programs of many types and at various sites, and also toured sheltered workshops programs and their associated departments of rehabilitation and placement. Many of our discussions with staff were conducted at the sites,

which added a dimension to the understanding of their positions within programs.

This report will focus on the two aspects of the study in detail: sheltered workshops, and high-school vocational programs.

Sheltered Workshops for the Mentally Retarded

Methodology

In proposing to explore sheltered workshops for the mentally retarded in Allegheny County, we wanted to get a sense of such aspects as: characteristics of workshops clients, the place of this type of programming in the continuum of services for MR, the kind of movement into and out of workshops that is seen, and issues currently facing this type of programming.

The first step in carrying out this aspect of the research was to decide which sheltered workshop organizations would be studied. We asked knowledgeable people in the field, from relevant agencies such as Mental Health/Mental Retardation (MH/MR) and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), which sheltered workshops were most closely associated with service to the mentally retarded. We found that two organizations were singled out unanimously: Goodwill and Parc-way, the job training arm of the Association for Retarded Citizens. We decided to focus on these agencies in our research.

We began exploring these two service agencies by gathering the printed materials that were available, and interviewing staff. We discovered the structure of each agency in terms of workshops. Goodwill has one central location in the South Side of Pittsburgh serving close to 200 people in workshops and an auxilliary workshop, with 35 clients, in East Hills. Parc-way has 5 workshops, called plants, scattered throughout county. For the purposes of the research, we decided to study the central Goodwill location, and 2 of the 5 Parc-way plants. The plants in Carnegie and Wilkinsburg were randomly selected for study.

With the selection of specific sites, we could begin to focus the data collection. We interviewed staff people from both agencies who were involved in administration, marketing, rehabilitation, training, and placement. We requested data from administrative, rehabilitation and placement personnel on client characteristics, details of placements from workshops to competitive work, assessment data compiled, and follow-up data on workshops participants of 1981. Confidentiality concerns mandated that these data be compiled by agency staff and distributed to us. The literature on sheltered workshops was also surveyed.

This section will discuss the findings in terms of three major areas: 1) characteristics of sheltered workshop clients, 2) the placement activities of these agencies, and 3) issues the workshops are facing. A summary of client characteristics and placement information begins on page 13.

Findings - Characteristics of workshop clients

One of the goals of the research was to understand who the participants in the workshops were. Towards that end, we requested data on present workshop clients from Parc-way and Goodwill. We utilized the data to obtain a description of individuals currently in these agencies' workshops. These characteristics are presented below.

Exceptionality: All clients in the sheltered workshop programs of both Goodwill and Parc-way are mentally retarded. They may have other disabilities, as in Parc-way's second shift, an evening shift at the Carnegie plant involving 11 individuals who are classified dual-diagnosis (MH/MR). Clients may also have associated physical or other handicaps. However, the primary exceptionality of all program participants remains MR. This is not true of other programs within Goodwill, nor of sheltered workshop programs of other agencies in the community such as Vocational Rehabilitation Center or Easter Seals, which may include clients from a number of exceptionalities..

WAC-workshop breakdown: Individuals classified as Work Acitivity Center (WAC) participants produce at less than 50% of normal production levels. Those defined as workshop employees produce at 50% or greater. The percent of WAC, therefore, is an indication of the degree to which a facility caters to more severely disabled clients. The breakdown indicated below for Goodwill is for the main Carson street facility; that for Parc-way represents all five plants.

	Parc-way		Goodwill	
	Num.	%	Num.	%
WAC	220	87	85	65
Shelt. Workshop	33	13	46	35
Totals	253	100	131	100

Parc-way plants vary in this respect. The percent of sheltered workshop clients ranges from 2% at Wilkinsburg plant, to 25% at the Strip District plant. It can be seen that both Goodwill and Parc-way workshops have a greater emphasis on slower-producing Work Activity Center clients. Both agencies define themselves as being geared to the lower functioning to a greater degree than other facilities in the area. Parc-way indicated that it has some individuals with extremely low productivities of 8-12%, and has recently had a special program in which 12 Theraputic Activity Center (TAC) clients were brought into the workshops. TAC is a lower level of programming than either WAC or workshop.

Sex: The breakdown of male and female at the two agencies workshops is as follows:

	Parc-way		Goodwill	
	Num.	%	Num.	%
Male	146	59	63	48
Female	101	41	68	52
Totals	247	100	131	100

Race: Data as to race of clients was supplied by Parc-way only. Goodwill does not keep such data, but personnel estimated the clients at the Carson Street facility to be fairly evenly divided between Black and White.

	Parc-way	
	Num.	%
White	222	90
Black	25	10
Totals	247	100

Living Arrangements: Clients in workshops live predominately with their families or in community living arrangements (CLAs). A few live independently. The specific breakdown is as follows:

	Parc-way		Goodwill	
	Num.	%	Num.	%
Family	156	60	60	46
CLA	103	40	65	50
Independent			6	5
Totals	259	100	131	101

Goodwill which keeps data separate for WAC and workshop clients indicates the following living arrangements for these two groups:

	Goodwill			
	WAC		Workshop	
	Num.	%	Num.	%
Family	34	40	26	57
CLA	49	58	16	35
Independent	2	2	4	9
Totals	85	100	46	101

It can be seen that at Goodwill, WAC clients tend to live in CLAs to a greater extent than do workshop clients, and workshop clients are more likely to live with their families and independently.

A number of issues were raised in respect to clients in CLAs. CLAs were described by one source as requiring that residents be involved in daytime programming and accordingly, as not having extensive staffing during the day. Goodwill indicated that this causes problems when alternative employment is considered, if it involves evening rather than day hours. Some employment options, such as the cleaning services, and fast food restaurants tend to require evening hours. Parc-way, however, felt that this was not a problem, that CLAs were willing to work out arrangements for their residents.

Goodwill described a similiar problem in respect to down time, as they lay off sheltered workshop clients when there is no work. This lack of day programming was noted as problem for those clients living in CLAs. In fact, special attempts are made to find work during down time for those clients who live in

Goodwill's Dom Care facilities and are in the sheltered workshop, so as not to burden Dom Care staff.

Age: Clients of Parc-ways 5 plants range in age from 20 to 66, with a mean of 35 and a median of 34 years old. The separate plants differ somewhat in age composition. The mean ages at the two plants in our focused study are: Carnegie - 36.9 years old and Wilkinsburg - 31.5 years old.

Clients in Goodwill's WAC and workshop range in age from 22 to 68. Average age is 37 and median age is 35. If we look at Goodwill's WAC and workshop separately, we find WAC clients to be slightly older than workshop clients. WAC clients have a mean age of 39 and a median of 36; workshop clients have a mean of 35 and a median of 31.5.

Breaking down the clients into age groups can provide additional insight on this variable:

	Parc-way		Goodwill	
Age	Num.	%	Num.	%
20-29	91	38	40	31
30-39	92	38	44	34
40 and over	58	24	47	36
Totals	241	100	131	101

Parc-way's clients are concentrated more heavily in the two younger age groups, with fewer in the oldest group. Goodwill, with a somewhat older clientele, has a lower percent in the youngest groups and a higher percent in the oldest group. Using chi square analysis, it was found that the age distribution of the two agencies is significantly different than chance, with $p = .05$.

Program entry date: The most experienced clients in the Parc-way program entered in 1964, 22 years ago. The most recent entered in 1986. The mean year of program entry is 1978, the median 1981. The earliest Goodwill date of entry is for one client who entered the program in 1958, the latest is 1986. The average starting date was 1978 and the median was 1979.

Breaking down the distribution of the clients of the two agencies into groups according to year of entry yields the following:

	Parc-way		Goodwill	
Year of Entry	Num.	%	Num.	%
'82-'86	105	42	43	33
'77-'81	53	21	47	36
before '76	89	36	41	31
Totals	247	99	131	100

Forty-two percent of Parc-way's clients entered in the last 5 years. Thirty-six percent of employees presently in Parc-way workshop have been there for more than 11 years. Goodwill has somewhat fewer in both the most and least recent categories, and a greater proportion of clients who entered 5-10 years ago. This distribution of Parc-way and Goodwill clients according to year of entry was found to be significantly different than chance using chi square analysis, with $p = .009$.

The interim between school and workshop: In reviewing the data on individual clients, we noted a number of clients who had entered these agencies after long periods of what appears to be no programming. Three people entered Goodwill between 1978 and 1980 who had completed school 28, 29 and 52 years previously, respectively, with no programming reported in the interim. A client was listed as having entered Parc-way in 1967, 17 years after completing school with no interim programing. Two clients entered Parc-way, in 1970 and in 1972, six years after having completed school. Unfortunately, data on background was missing for a large number of clients, so further conclusions could not be drawn in respect to this variable.

There is a new program which aims at reducing the wait between school and workshop. The transitional training project involves new graduates being preferentially placed with agencies. The funding for this project is from MH/MR and individual clients carry their funding with them, so that they can be placed in programs that their case managers judge to be the best. The Parc-way spokesperson describes the program as having started in January 1, 1986. Between January and June, Parc-way had 11 such clients, since July 1, it has had 6 additional clients who were June graduates of school systems. The agency expects a few more in January 1987. The original specification was that potential clients for this program be 22-24 years old, but that was later

relaxed. These clients often do not come from the agency's waiting list.

Goodwill reports having had 15 slots funded in its Recent Grads Program in the past three years. Unlike other Goodwill clients, who are always placed initially into WAC programs, these youngsters can enter the program in regular work and move to wherever they seem to fit. They have additional support services in the form of counseling and group sessions. The case manager for the Recent Grads Program has 20 clients, rather than the usual 45. Case managers are described as having to deal with issues of adolescence with these youngsters, which is a new area for them. At present there are 5 such youngsters in the WAC program, all of whom started at Goodwill in 1986. They range in age from 22 to 30 and completed school in the years from 1978 to 1985.

Long range goal: A long-range goal is set for each client in his or her Individual Written Program Plan (IWPP). This is developed soon after entry to the program and updated in the yearly staffing on a client. The long range goals specified for Parc-way and Goodwill clients are as follows:

	Parc-way		Goodwill	
	Num.	%	Num.	%
WAC	16	6	4	3
Shel. Wrkshop	133	52	75	57
Long term Shelt.			5	4
Compet. Employ.	106	42	45	34
Retirement			2	2
Totals	259	100	131	100

Sheltered workshop is, then, the eventual placement seen for more than half of the clients of the two agencies. A considerable minority, however, are envisaged as eventually working competitively. Only a small percent of clients are seen as remaining at WAC levels of programming.

Findings - Placement Activities of the Agencies

There is nationwide concern with the traditional lack of client movement out of workshops. It is only within the past few years that agencies have begun to see an aspect of their function as actively pursuing such movement. Both Goodwill and Parc-way

are currently putting additional emphasis on placement out of clients, as will be described below.

Goodwill: Goodwill has three placement counselors who serve all Goodwill clients. MH/MR is one of five types of people served. Placement of this group of clients has been the most difficult and numbers are low. The placement statistics of Goodwill MH/MR clients for 1982 to the present are as follows:

	Competitive Employment	Higher Level Training
1982	3	*
1983	3	*
1984	5	0
1985	5	17
1/2/86 - 10/31/86	5	14

* Statistics are not available

These figures do not indicate how long individuals retained the jobs in which they were placed, nor the nature of the jobs. The Goodwill Placement Coordinator reported that of the 5 people placed in 1985, 3 were placed on temporary jobs and only one person has retained his or her job. Goodwill set its placement goal for MH/MR clients for 1986 at 5 placements. This goal was met as of 10/31/86. Of the individuals placed in higher level training, most were placed on Goodwill's mobile work force, a cleaning and janitorial service.

At Goodwill, people are considered for placement when they reach 75% production levels. The jobs are described as being mostly entry level service type: cook's helper, fast food. A case is kept open for 90 days after placement, during which time a client can return to Goodwill if the job does not work out. Contact is described as being maintained for up to 6 months. Follow-up is over the phone. The placement coordinator would like to change follow-up to site visits as she sees this as being more effective. She describes the biggest problem in placing clients as "no employer is willing to settle for a client who can't produce". She would like to develop a supported work program involving job coaches on the job with new employees, which she feels would enable her to place more lower functioning clients.

Parc-way: Parc-way has recently reorganized its placement department and it is now called Supported Work. It has a director, and 3 full-time, and 1 part-time, job specialists. One job specialist is full-time at Black Box Corporation, supporting 2

Parc-way employees. Parc-way's placement department furnished us with a list of the specific placements made between 7/84 and 10/86 and they break down as follows:

Parc-way Placements: Type of Work

	Volun tary	Part Time	Tempor ary	Full Time	Total
7/84-12/84	5	2	10	2	19
1985	5	2	5	6	18
1/86-10/86	4	3	5	7	19

According to the new Manager of Supported Employment at Parc-way, the major problem in placing people is not having enough job specialists. She describes the situation as one in which they "have no trouble getting past the personnel department". Before the supported work concept, Parc-way placement staff would find a possible position, but would not be familiar with the job before they placed a client in it, and could not support the client. Now, the job specialist has a relationship wih the employer, and knows the requirements of the job before a client is placed. Also, the job interview is circumvented, which she feels is important. "Job readiness" is described as no longer being a factor. The previous approach involved training and then placement; the supported employment approach involves placement, and then on-the-job training coupled with support. She describes the selling points of supported employment to employers as their being guaranteed a level of output (which will be met by the job specialist if necessary), and reliable employees who tend to be employed longer than non-disabled; a situation of long-term benefits and short-term risks. In seeking clients for supported work, Parc-way does not set production requirements. Rather, the agency seeks clients who are interested in competitive employment and are supported in this decision by their parents. They also attempt to recruit supported work candidates from the waiting list by sending letters describing this type of employment.

The situation at a current supported work placement involves 2 Parc-way clients accompanied by a full-time job specialist, as "the company feels better having the job specialist there". Because the company's location is inaccessible by public transportation, one of the jobs of the specialist is to transport the employees to and from work every day. These individuals

remain Parc-way employees. The company pays Parc-way who, in turns, pays these individuals.

The Manager of supported employment feels confident she can place 2-3 employees a month under the present system. She reports that 2 were placed in October and 1 in November of this year. She sees the number of placements as limited only by the number of job specialists, and feels that opportunites for job development are available. At present, jobs have been developed in the areas of warehousing, janitorial services and micrographics. She'd like to expand to messenger and electronic positions. A board member of ARC active in Parc-way affairs, brought up the question of the financial aspect of supported work. Having one supervisor for two employees is expensive. He feels 8-9 trainees per supervisor are necessary to break even.

Additional issues that contribute to both agencies' difficulty in placing mentally retarded individuals on jobs relate to the nature of the Pittsburgh labor market. The high overall unemployment rates in recent years, and type of work typically available in Pittsburgh are cited as making it especially difficult to make placements. An additional issue cited by a number of spokespersons is the high degree of unionization of Pittsburgh industries. Unions are described as resistant to having mentally retarded members, as they do not wish to have such an identification for their membership. The lack of union membership limits the kinds of jobs for which clients can be considered.

Movement in the Workshop - Parc-way: In order to explore the issue of client movement out of the workshop from another angle, we asked for data on the present status of clients from some years ago. Parc-way was able to furnish us with a look at the clients of January 1981, and to tell us where these individuals are now. Of the 185 clients enrolled at that time, 113 (61%) are still with the agency, 72 (39%) have left. The current status of the January 1981 clients of Parc-way is as follows:

Parc-way Clients 1/81: Current Status

	Number	Percent
Remain in shop	113	61
Comp. employ.	8	4
Other voc. facility	16	9
Volunteer	5	3
TAC	5	3
Residential program	3	2
Parc-way waiting list	1	1
Retired	2	1
Died	2	1
No programming	8	4
Unknown	22	12
Totals	185	101

Within the past 6 years then, there has not been a great deal of movement. Only 4% of clients went on to a level of programming that was clearly at a higher level, competitive employment. Fourteen percent are in other programs, whether a different vocational facility, a TAC or a residential program.

The Pittsburgh Sheltered Workshop Association: Four agencies with sheltered workshops in the Pittsburgh area have founded the Pittsburgh Sheltered Workshop Association (PSWA). Members are Goodwill, Parc-way, Easter Seals and Pittsburgh Blind Association. The Association developed out of Goodwill's request to the Buhl Foundation for funding to do a market survey. Buhl's response was that it would be interested in such a study, provided that it served the needs of more than one workshop and that these workshops join together. The study, once accomplished, had three major findings in regards to work done by sheltered workshops: 1) 85% of such work is noncompetitive. Only in 15% of their work, are Pittsburgh workshops in direct competition, 2) that there is a high degree of customer satisfaction with work done in workshops and 3) that there is a low degree of recognition of sheltered workshops in the community. Purchasing agents in community industries have little awareness of sheltered workshops.

The funding for PSWA comes from the 4 workshops and from the Buhl Foundation. This year, the first year of PSWA's operation, Buhl contibutes $30,000, and the workshops a total of $20,000. Next year the funding "flips", with Buhl contributing $20,000 and the workshops $30,000. As of December 1, 1986, an executive

director of PSWA has been hired, who is described as a sales marketing person. The function of the director is to generate business. The director is also expected to focus on public relations and to generate public awareness of the availability of quality services at competitive prices at the workshops. It will be of interest to see whether such a unified approach to marketing will be effective in generating business for the workshops.

Summary: Client Characteristics and Placement Information

Client characteristics: The workshops at Goodwill's Carson Street facility, and the 5 Parc-way plants located throughout the county, tend to serve lower functioning mentally retarded individuals. The majority of clients in the workshop programs of these two agencies perform at less than 50% of normal production levels and are classified as Work Activity Center clients. This is especially characteristic of Parc-way clients, 87% of whom are WAC participants. Goodwill is fairly evenly divided between male and female clients; Parc-way has a somewhat higher proportion of male clients, at 59%. Information as to race indicates that Parc-way, perhaps serving the county more than the city, has a clientele that is 90% White and 10% Black. Goodwill describes its clientele as fairly evenly divided between the two racial groups. Workshop clients live predominately with their families or in community living arrangements (CLAs). A few live independently. Parc-way clients are more likely to live with their families (60%) than in CLAs (40%), and none live independently. Half of Goodwill's clients live in CLAs, 5% live independently, and the remaining 46% live with their families. An issue was raised in respect to the requirement that CLA residents be involved in daily daytime programming. There was some indication that this creates difficulties in regards to evening work options and lay-offs from workshops where there is no contract work.

Clients in the two agencies' sheltered workshops range in age from 20 to 68. The average age of Parc-way clients is 35, that of Goodwill clients 37. Dividing the clients into age groups indicates that 76% of Parc-way clients are under 40, 24% 40 and over. Goodwill has a higher percentage of clients 40 or older (36%). The average client in both agencies' workshops entered in 1978, and so, has been in the program for 8 years. The most experienced clients at each agency entered Goodwill in 1958, and Parc-way in 1964. The distribution of clients according to year of entry groups shows that 42% of Parc-way clients entered in the past 5 years, 21% from 6 to 10 years ago

and 36%, 11 or more years ago. The percentages of Goodwill clients falling into these three groups is 33%, 36% and 31%, respectively. A number of clients were observed to have entered the agencies' programs many years after they had completed schooling, with no interim placement reported. A new Recent Grads program was noted which funds slots in workshop programs for student coming out of the school systems. Goodwill reported serving 15 recent graduates, and Parc-way 17 so far this year, under this program.

Data on long-range goals for clients of both agencies indicates that over 50% are expected to end up in sheltered workshops. For some current clients, this represents a move up from WAC status, for others, this involves remaining at their current level of programming. A considerable minority are expected to eventually be in competitive employment; 42% of Parc-way clients, 34% of Goodwill's. WAC programming is the long-term goal for a small percent of Parc-way and Goodwill clients (6% and 3% respectively).

Placement: Placement data from both agencies indicate fairly low numbers of clients placed in competitive employment. Goodwill has placed 5 mentally retarded clients a year for the past three years, mostly in entry level service jobs. It is known that some of these jobs are temporary and some are part-time. Parc-way figures indicate 18-19 placements a year for the past three years. Of these, only a minority are permanent full-time jobs. Others are temporary, voluntary and part-time. Goodwill clients are referred for placement when they reach 75% production levels. Parc-way requires that clients be interested in competitive employment and have family support for this decision to be considered for competitive work.

Both agencies are very interested in the supported work concept. Goodwill would like to incorporate the job coach approach, asserting that this would enable more of the lower functioning clients to get jobs. Parc-way, as of August 1986, has reorganized its placement department, which is now the Supported Work Department. The agency presently has 3 clients in supported employment, assisted by job specialists. The major limitation to additional placements seen by the Department Manager is the paucity of job specialists. She feels that interesting employers in creating job slots is not a significant problem. A Board Member of the agency felt that the financial costs of supported work needed to be investigated; that the expense involved in having a full-time job specialist for 2 employees was too high. He suggested that 8-9 trainees per specialist were necessary to make the program cost-effective.

An additional insight into movement from the workshop was provided by Parc-way's follow-up of its January, 1981 clients. In tracing the current location of its 185 clients of almost 6 years ago, Parc-way found that 113 (61%) were in the agency's workshops, and 72 (39%) were no longer in the Parc-way system. Fourteen percent are in other programs at different vocational facilities, TACs or residential facilities. Four percent are currently in competitive employment. Given both the placement and the follow-up data it becomes clear that the numbers of individuals moving out of the workshops are low, especially of those moving to competitive job situations.

Findings - Issues workshops are now facing

Sheltered workshops are currently caught in new developments and are struggling to find their place in a number of ways. They originally represented a great step forward, providing a kind of employment to individuals who had no other alternative, who otherwise were sitting at home. The Goodwill workshop was started on a small basis in the 1960's. The deinstitutionalization of the 1970's and the development of the Mental Health/Mental Retardation (MH/MR) system was responsible for its growth. Between 1972 and 1976, Goodwill workshop enrollment went from 30 to 200. Parc-way developed out of parental concerns that youngsters have some programming. The first Parc-way workshop was begun in Wilkinsburg in 1964. Parents at that time are described as seeking a permanent place for their youngsters. In this section of the report, we will discuss a number of interrelated issues with which we found workshops to be currently grappling.

Issue 1: Movement out of workshops and their ultimate function. In recent years, criticism has been leveled at this type of programming for its failure to move significant numbers of people out. The impression has been that once people enter workshops they tend to remain within them. Questions have been raised as to whether this is in the best interests of clients, or rather, they should be encouraged to proceed to the highest level of employment of which they are capable. This has stimulated questions as to the ultimate function of workshops. Are they primarily places of employment, with goals directed at providing steady work in a pleasant environment, and placement out not a priority? Should they be rehabilitative in nature; a stage in a learning process in which people pass through and with successful completion, move on to higher level programming, so that the goal of movement out assumes precedence? A related question is whether such movement be envisioned for everyone or only selected individuals.

An approach to this that is frequently seen regards workshops as including two groups of people for whom goals differ: one static, for whom workshop placement is an endpoint, and the second, for whom rehabilitative goals should predominate, and eventual movement out be striven for. An alternative view sees movement into competitive employment as a goal that should be set for everyone. In any event, workshops have had to examine

their policies and rate of movement and have been making efforts to increase placement of workshop clients.

Issue 2: The place of sheltered workshops in the continuum of rehabilitative services. A typical way to view rehabilitation services for the mentally retarded has been as a continuum of levels of programming that are increasingly independent and work-related. Therapeutic Activity Center (TAC), Work Activity Center (WAC), sheltered workshops and competitive employment are often seen as the order of programming. People are placed into an appropriate level, and progress through the subsequent levels until they reach their highest programming potential. Those who are not considered suitable for competitive employment, remain in the workshop.

This view has shifted currently in light of new options for competitive employment that allow those who could not previously work on their own to work competitively. These include mobile work teams, enclave models, and, the newly popular supported employment model. These models also tend not to be based on a continuum concept. An individual might be placed directly into supported employment without having been in a sheltered workshop, for example. Workshops are currently struggling with these new developments and the questions they raise. Who can be competitively employed? Should placement be the goal for everyone? If so, what is the place of sheltered workshops? Are they obsolete, and should they be phased out?

Both workshop organizations that we studied have put increased emphasis on placement, and on developing new options for people who would previously have been judged unsuitable for competitive employment. They each have to deal with issues such as: Who can be considered for competitive employment? Under what conditions can they be employed? Who wants to go into competitive employment? Do these individuals have their parents' support for such a decision? Do CLAs provide adequate support for competitive employment of their residents?

Each workshop faces obstacles in placing its clients. Goodwill, which remains with a substantial number of deinstitutionalized clients, reports the occurance of "Goodwillitis" - a condition in which people are so used to and comfortable with Goodwill that they will not consider leaving. Parc-way indicates the situation of parents who founded the workshops as a permanent solution to the placement of their youngsters and resist exposing their children to the complications of competitive employment, which often involve evening hours and reliance on public transportation. Right now

competitive employment opportunities are generally limited and employers starting new programs have to be convinced that they will work. Workshops tend to select their most capable and/or motivated employees, who want to work and will be supported in that decision by their parents. Each workshop has success stories to tell of mentally retarded people presently employed. However, numbers are small, and the great majority of clients remain in workshops.

Issue 3: Striking a balance between business and rehabilitation aspects of the program. Workshops face the issue of balancing business and rehabilitation goals. If the workshop sees itself primarily as a business, its major aims tend to be to get contracts, meet contract goals, and keep people employed. Participants in the program would tend to be called "employees", rather than clients. At the same time, however, work in a sheltered workshop has to be considered from a rehabilitative viewpoint, in terms of the degree to which it increases the capabilities of clients.

These goals are sometimes in conflict and raise questions with which workshops have to grapple on a day-to-day basis. As possible work contracts are not easy to come by, should any work be accepted that will keep clients employed, or only work that fills a rehabilitative function? Should contract work completely dictate the day's activities, or should attempts be made to include programming that teaches skills that are not part of the work? If the goal is to complete contract work on time, should the best workers be put on the job, to ensure completion? How does this influence placement attempts? There are shop managers who resist efforts to place their best workers as that lessens the capacity to meet contract deadlines. Also, how does that influence who is accepted into the workshop - the better able who can keep up their end of production, or the slower producers who may be more in need of services? The demand on the workshop to function as a viable business at the same time as it functions as a rehabilitative service for disabled individuals has made for some unique concerns. As one report on sheltered workshops has phrased it: "Service providers have been asked to function as small businesses that (a) paid reasonable wages to their employees; (b) hired nearly everyone who wanted a job; and (c) placed their best workers with competing firms" (Rhodes, et al, 1982).

Ideally, the workshops would all like to have work that is therapeutic - that is interesting, teaches new skills, and enhances the capabilities of their employees. But it is clear that one of the most pressing issues of the workshops is the difficulty of obtaining contract work, and few refuse any work

possible if the alternative is that employees are out of work. This may mean the acceptance of work, at times, whose therapeutic value is in question.

The emphasis on workshop as business has been increasing in recent years. Everyone seems to agree that contacts with firms to solicit contracts have to be made in a completely businesslike manner. The days of businesses giving contracts to workshops on a charitable basis , "to help the handicapped" are over. Work must be done in a professional manner, with absolute quality control, and contracts completed on time. Payment requested should be in line with what other firms would bid, and not lower. Although the workshop may take longer to complete a job, the rate paid per item completed is the same as that which a nonhandicapped workshop would be paid. It should be pointed out, however, that unlike employees in outside jobs, workshop clients do not receive benefits such as sick leave and paid vacations.

Parc-way, especially, appears to have embraced a strong emphasis on business. The former head of Parc-way, who recently left and has not yet been replaced, had a unique background in both human services and business. The agency's new placement director, hired in August, is a business person with a background in job analysis. Management control in the areas of earnings distribution, utilitization rates of workshops, etc. have been instituted as assessment techniques. Clearly, this shift toward business is the wave of the future and perhaps, the challenge to be met is to develop workshops that function as viable businesses without compromising their commitment to rehabilitation.

Issue 4: Ways of effectively marketing workshop services. It is clear that more is being demanded of the workshops in terms of marketing and they are being forced to develop new marketing techniques and a businesslike attitude. This is a departure for many agencies and involves the application of standards that are not traditionally part of the social service tradition.

Parc-way has developed a marketing strategy that involves seeking a niche; developing certain products that can be marketed to area customers. They have identified a number of such products and have changed their workshops into plants for their production. They seek customers primarily for these products, and, according to a board member, are constantly "racking their brains" to come up with additional viable products. A benefit of concentrating on specific products is realized in the way of training. Parc-way employees learn skills that they can use on additional contracts.

Goodwill's approach is less directed. The agency's material describes its workshops as specializing in "shrink packaging, assembly and disassembly, grading, collating and binding books, sorting, printing and engraving, and other related jobs". Personnel in charge of marketing indicate that Goodwill will accept almost any job that clients are capable of performing. Two of its workshop operations depend almost completely on individual contractors.

A difficulty cited under such conditions is the lack of transferable training that is seen. Each new job tends to mean new tasks so that expertise is not gained through contract work. Another drawback recognized by staff is that many of the tasks involved have no training value for jobs in the outside world. They point out that no one is going to be hired for the types of jobs done in the workshops when these involve cutting clothes into rags or collating by walking in groups around a table.

Issue 5: Lack of differentiation between WAC and workshop. Our investigations have shown us that the difference between WAC and sheltered workshop tends to be one of degree, not type. Licensing for type of program is according to Department of Labor regulations. The major difference between the two is that WAC participants produce at a level that is below 50% of a nonhandicapped worker; sheltered workshop participants at 50% or above. Sheltered workshop employees are guarenteed an income of at least 50% of minimum wage each day they work. Individuals are paid on a piece rate basis, so that it is necessary to monitor each individual's output, usually by counting the number of individual items completed in a time period. Determination of productivity is made quarterly, and a client can move from WAC to workshop status if productivity exceeds 49% for two quarters.

The workshops we studied made very little differentiation between WAC and workshop participants. All clients do the same type of work, often sitting side by side, although that was not legally permitted until recent legislation. (Previously there had to be at least an aisle between WAC and workshop participants). As indicated earlier, what are called sheltered workshops, are actually predominately WACs, as the majority of clients function at below 50% production levels. Only 13% of the workers in Parc-way industries' plants are at the sheltered workshop level, with the remainder at the WAC level of production. Goodwill is also predominately WAC, with 65% of clients at lower than 50% production levels.

Issue 6: The appropriate use of down time. The issue of use of down time is also of current concern. Since contract work is limited, at least 50% of time in workshops is down time, time without paid work. How that time is used in terms of individuals is an issue. Individual employee involvement and wages are determined by who is assigned to the available work.

The two agencies studied differ in respect to this issue. Parc-way does not lay off people. When paid contract work is not available, work sampling is done. This involves tasks that simulate work. About 50% of each client's day is spent in work sampling, with individuals rotating through work and work sampling assignments. Participants are paid a nominal amount per hour when they do work sampling. The declared Parc-way goal of equity of wages among participants has led to movement toward equity of distribution of paid work. At present fewer people have earnings at the very low and very high ends of the wage scale. The aim is for wages to approach a normal curve.

The policy at Goodwill involves workshop clients being laid off when there is no contract work. WAC participants are maintained in various activities. The rehabilitation department is not comfortable with the way down time is used, and has tried different approaches to keeping WAC participants busy when there is no contract work. The wages of individuals clients vary greatly at Goodwill.

Issue 7: Need for more places, and issue of retirement. An issue that is constantly apparent is that there are not enough workshop places for people who need them. Both agencies studied have considerable, and growing waiting lists. (Parc-way's: 118; Goodwill's: "greater than 40") This does not take into consideration the numbers of people who are not in contact with the system, having given up or never approached it, whose number is not determined, but is probably at least 1000 in Allegheny County. There are many people with no programming. A related issue is that of retirement of elderly workshop employees. Both workshops have employees in their 60's and perhaps older. The question arises of whether there is such a thing as retirement from a workshop. Could other programming, perhaps recreational rather than vocational, be the next step for people who have spent, in some cases, 30 or more years in a workshop? Programming for elderly MR is not in evidence. According to some observers, they are not accepted into regular senior center programs by their non-handicapped peers. Of course, additional slots in sheltered workshops would be made available for younger individuals with the transfer of elderly workshop clients to alternative programming.

High School Vocational Programs for the Mentally Retarded

In planning a study to understand the vocational training opportunities open to mentally retarded youngsters in the high schools of Allegheny County, we were able to build on our experience. The knowledge of prevailing systems we had gained in our previous project, as well as the contacts we had made, allowed us access to information on the high school programs. As in the previous report, our focus was Allegheny County, which involved us in the two Intermediate Units which serve this area: IU2 serving the Pittsburgh Public Schools, and IU3, the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU) serving the 42 suburban districts of the County.

IU2 - The Pittsburgh Public Schools

Methodology

In terms of IU2, our entry into the system was via Project Liaison, the program that places rehabilitation counselors and assistant teachers in the city high schools to help special education students enter and successfully complete vocational courses. In the Pittsburgh Public Schools, students classified as educable mentally retarded (EMR), attend the regular high schools. The more severely retarded, trainable (TMR) and severely/profoundly retarded (SPMR), students attend Conroy School, a special education center for the mentally retarded. We were interested in exploring the vocational courses available to MR students in both the high schools and in Conroy School.

By working through Project Liaison, we were able to learn about the vocational systems in both types of schools. We felt that the people involved with the project were those most knowledgeable in the areas in which we were interested and by working within Project Liaison, permission for the research was granted by the school system without difficulty. We obtained figures on the numbers of EMR students at each of the 10 city high schools and the numbers of MR students age 14 and older at Conroy and at Pioneer School, the city's special education center for the physically handicapped, attended by MR students who also have physical disabilities.

We knew we wanted to visit Conroy and observe the programs for the more severely impaired. We also wanted to visit two city high schools attended by EMR students. We selected the two schools randomly out of the 8 high schools with significant EMR populations. The two schools which had, respectively 1 and 3, EMR students according to the Public School statistics, were not included in the selection. By this process, Westinghouse and Peabody High Schools become our mainstreamed EMR sites.

The methodology for gathering information on vocational programs for mentally retarded students in the Pittsburgh Public Schools thus entailed a number of steps. First we spoke with the acting project director of Liaison, Linda Thomas, discussing the programs in which these youngsters were involved, the type of vocational courses they take, the degree to which they successfully complete these courses, etc. Ms. Thomas also made specific information on the number of EMR students taking vocational courses at various high schools available to us. She also supplied us with written materials on vocational programming in IU2. A major aspect of our data gathering was the visits to the three sites; Westinghouse, Peabody and Conroy Schools.

At Westinghouse and Peabody, we met with and interviewed Project Liaison staff. In both cases, that included a rehabilitation counselor. At Westinghouse, an assistant teacher is also part of Project Liaison staffing. The counselors and teacher gave us a sense of how the vocational programs worked, those in which MR students were enrolled, and the numbers enrolled in each. They also gave us valuable insight into how the program worked, its problems, strengths and weaknesses, and potential areas for further development. We were shown around each of the schools and were able to observe the vocational courses in which MR students were involved, and to talk with the vocational teachers as to their views of the program.

Findings

Mainstreamed students in the high schools: We found that although, by law, all vocational programs are open to all students, the process of discussion between parents and counselors concerning students' schedules leads to MR students being concentrated in certain areas. Guidance counselors tend to advise MR students and their parents away from those courses in which extensive technical expertise and/or reading is required, especially those in which previous MR students have not been successful. Vocational courses in which mentally retarded students were enrolled in the 1985/6 school year are given in the following table. It may be seen that in that school year, MR

students were enrolled in 20 of the 40 OVT courses offered in the Pittsburgh Public Schools (see Appendix I for a complete listing of OVT course offerings). A small number of students were enrolled in two OVT courses simultaneously. It is clear that not all students originally enrolled in these courses successfully completed them. Particular vocational areas may have had no successful MR completers.

Pittsburgh Public Schools - OVT Enrollment
of Mainstreamed MR Students 1985/6

Child Care/Guidance	24
Fast Food	22
Food Technology	21
Auto Body	12
Carpentry	7
Baking	6
Bricklaying	6
Cosmetology	6
Distributive Education	5
Fashion & Clothing Specialist	5
Laundry & Dry Cleaning	5
Caregiving	4
Commercial Art	3
Printing	3
Auto Mechanics	2
Cabinetry	1
Electrical Wiring	1
Radio & TV	1
Small Engine Repair	1
Welding	1
Unknown	1
Conroy programs	12
Total	149

Three of these course areas have an especially high MR enrollment; Child Care/Guidance, Fast Foods, and Foods Technology. Forty-five percent of EMR students taking vocational courses are in these 3 areas, with almost a third in the two food-related courses. The vocational courses taken by EMR students at two city high schools, Westinghouse and Peabody, in the current school year have been listed below.

OVT Courses Enrollment for EMR Students:
Westinghouse and Peabody High Schools
1986/7 School Year

Westinghouse

Food Service	14
Child Care/Parenting	7
Auto Mechanics	4
Carpentry	3
Cosmetology	2
Bricklaying	1

Peabody

Fast Foods	10
Bricklaying	1
Auto Body	1
Dental Assistant	1
Welding	1

The popularity of food-related courses is confirmed for both these schools. They were described by the Liaison Counselors as having great intrinsic appeal and as being most likely to lead to eventual work.

Students attend their vocational courses five days a week, for 2-3 periods a day. Most attend within their home school; some travel to other city high schools for specific course offerings. 70% of EMR students in the upper grades of Pittsburgh high schools are reported to be taking skill-centered vocational courses this year. Those who choose not to take vocational courses may not view vocational training as a priority, or may prefer to take electives such as music and art. If they have previously failed courses, they may have to concentrate on academics in order to meet graduation requirements.

All mainstreamed EMR students attend vocational classes with their non-retarded peers. They are, however, graded according to a separate standard. Grades tend to be based on attendance and hands-on skills. Written tests may be revised, given orally, or waived. Test scores may also be discounted or given minimal weight in computing grades. Students who attend classes and demonstrate a willingness to participate generally obtain a passing grade. On this basis, most EMR students complete their

vocational courses, and failures are primarily due to non-attendance.

Liaison counselors and teachers assist students in their vocational programming by acting as intermediaries between students and vocational teachers, who do not have a background in special education. Special educational students are limited to 6 per vocational course. It is clear that some vocational teachers are more amenable to having these students than others, and more flexible as to modifying curriculum and requirements. At times, counselors act as student advocates. Assistant teachers attend vocational classes in which special educational students are enrolled; they model good learning behavior, help students understand lectures and materials to be tested, and modify tests to reflect student reading level. According to its reports, Project Liaison has had a significant impact on increasing the numbers of EMR students who enroll in skill-centered vocational programs.

Liaison counselors are involved in post-graduation job placements and training to varying degrees. Sometimes students maintain contact with counselors after graduation, or contact them years later when they need help finding a job. The Liaison Counselors report that they attempt to connect graduating seniors with continued training programs, such as at Connelly Skill Learning Center, or with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR). Many students are described as being able to find jobs on their own, for example as cashiers, or at fast food restaurants.

Conroy: Conroy is the special school within the Pittsburgh Public School District for the mentally retarded. Most students remain until age 21. Conroy was originally established primarily for the more handicapped TMR and SPMR students. However, in the ensuing years, it became apparent that some EMR students needed the center environment that Conroy provided, and it was opened to them. The students 14 years old or above attending Conroy in the current school year are: 28 EMR, 85 TMR and 17 SPMR.

In 11th and 12th grades, EMR and TMR students spend half their day in vocational programs. A number of EMR students from city high schools come to Conroy for these half day programs. They are judged to need the extra supports that Conroy programs provide. Twelve such students were noted to attend Conroy programs in 1985/6. SPMR students are involved in coloring and matching activities rather than vocational training.

Conroy provides vocational training in four areas: food services, maintenance, production and assembly/clerical. In food service, students work in the cafeteria preparing lunch for the faculty. The maintenance shop focuses on the use of cleaning supplies and equipment, and the students are responsible for much of the cleaning of the school. The production shop is primarily a wood shop. Participants work on projects such as shelves, pen holders, and clock cabinets that are available for sale. The assembly/clerical shop is operated like a WAC. Students work on sorting, packaging, collating, operating office machines, and a variety of related tasks. The workshop has contracts with a number of non-profit organizations and undertakes relevant work for the Board of Education. For example, the Conroy workshop assembles and packages the plasticware/napkin kits that are used in school cafeterias throughout the city.

The goals of the vocational program in regards to EMR and TMR students differ, according to the school counselor. The aim is for EMR students at Conroy to perform at sheltered workshop levels (at least 50% of normal production rates) or to be capable of competitive employment. The goals for Conroy's TMR students center on being able to perform at WAC levels (less than 50% of normal production) and to have independent daily living skills.

The problems of placement of students after graduation were noted. Twenty-one Conroy students will graduate in June of 1987. Two of these students are SPMR, and will likely have no difficulty in obtaining a therapeutic activity center (TAC) placement. The lowest and highest functioning students at Conroy are reported to have significantly fewer placement problems than Conroy's average students. The highest functioning Conroy students are more likely to find competitive employment and sheltered workshop placements, and the lowest functioning students are more likely to obtain TAC placements, than the majority of Conroy's EMR and TMR students, who were described as "falling between the cracks".

The AIU - Suburban Allegheny County schools

Methodology

Our access to information on the suburban students was through AIU staff. Our initial contact was with Gladys Fox, the Vocational Coordinator of the AIU's Exceptional Children's Program, whose involvement had proven invaluable in our previous work. We wanted, first of all, to gain an understanding of the

situation in the County as a whole. Upon Ms. Fox's suggestion, we interviewed the 5 Program Adminstrators of the Exceptional Children's Program. The County is divided into 5 geographic sections, with a Program Administrator for each. The Program Administrator is responsible for students in his/her area of the following types: educable mentally retarded, trainable mentally retarded, severely and profoundly mentally retarded, physically handicapped and multiply handicapped. By speaking with each of the Administrators, we were able to gain insight into the variety of programs that exist in each area, and the numbers of students involved in each.

It developed that the vocational programs for MR in which the AIU was involved are at two types of sites: the 6 special education centers, and the area vocational-technical schools (vo-techs or AVTSs), which both district and center-based students may attend. As was detailed in our previous research, 2/3 of EMR students and 95% of TMR students in the county system are in special education centers, the remainder are mainstreamed in district classrooms. Therefore, we wanted to explore the vocational programs in special centers and in vo-techs.

We had also been interested in exploring the vocational courses taken by district-based MR students who did not attend vo-techs, but as these were under district, rather than AIU, auspices, AIU staff felt it could not give us permission to visit district schools. We were assured that there are few vocational options for district-based EMR students who do not attend vo-techs as: 1) Most district high schools do not have signficant vocational programming in general, rather leaving such courses to their respective vo-techs, and 2) MR students are not greatly involved in such voc courses as there are in district high schools, as they tend to be at advanced levels. However, as we were not able to explore this aspect of vocational programming, we don't have independent confirmation of this.

Another limit imposed by our methodology of exploring the situation through the AIU was that we thereby excluded those districts who have little involvement in the AIU but rather, develop and fund their own programming. Penn Hills, Highlands and McKeesport are examples of these. In addition, there are districts that have varying degrees of involvement with the AIU in terms of MR programming, for example, keeping their EMR students within district high schools, while sending more impaired students to the AIU's special education centers. The limits of this study did not enable us to explore each of the 42 school districts and determine programming in this respect.

Through our interviews with the program adminstrators, mostly on site, we visited 4 special education centers and toured two, Mon Valley Secondary and Pathfinder, visiting the vocational programs and observing students. We also visited a vo-tech, A.W. Beattie, selected because of its having a number of vocational programs developed specifically for handicapped youngsters. The visit to Beattie involved discussion with a learning facilitator whose job is to work with special students and their teachers to facilitate their involvement with the vocational programs. We also were able to talk with vocational teachers in these county settings. An additional focus in the AIU aspect of the study was with WAC programs. Upon learning that the AIU had a unique program in which each special education center had a fully-licensed Work Activities Center for low functioning students, primarily TMR youngsters, we interviewed the WAC coordinator and visited one of the WAC programs, at Eastern School.

Findings

There are 42 school districts within Allegheny County outside the city of Pittsburgh. The table and the accompanying map of Appendix II indicate where the county's mentally retarded secondary students (grades 8-12) attend school. The map indicates the location of mainstreamed high school classes, special education centers, and Area Vocational Technical Schools (AVTSs). Mainstreamed high school students attend classes in their own districts, or in nearby districts within their AIU division, if their own district does not have an appropriate secondary-level class.

Educable mentally retarded students mainstreamed in district high schools may be involved in vocational training programs in a number of ways. They may take vocational programs in their own schools, although, as was discussed above, this is not considered to occur frequently. There would be no special supports available to students in mainstreamed high school courses. They may come to the AIU special education centers for 1/2 day vocational programming specifically developed for handicapped students and they may attend the AVTS associated with their school district, also for 1/2 days. In order to take 1/2 day vocational programming, whether at special centers or at AVTSs, mainstreamed students must be caught up with academic credit requirements for graduation. They must also have the time in their schedules to devote one or two periods a day to travel between schools.

The districts within the county differ in respect to their emphasis on these options. Some stress the programs at the special centers so that almost all EMR students spend 1/2 a day at a center, and very few are involved in AVTS programming. Some place a stronger emphasis on AVTS programs and will only send students to a special center under unusual circumstances, especially 11th and 12th graders. There are those families who feel very strongly about mainstreaming and will refuse to send students to programming of any kind at a special center. Some districts send students to special centers for 9th and 10th grade vocational programming as an introduction to AVTS programs, in the same general field, in 11th and 12th grade. Also, because students can remain in school until 21, there is some flexibility in programming. There are cases in which students begin AVTS programs in 13th grade.

EMR students based in the special education centers can, similiarly, take advantage of vocational training both within their school and at the AVTS. Lower functioning students, primarily those classified TMR, are in WAC programming. Both groups of students can work within the centers, and on co-op jobs in the community, and are paid for both these options. In in-school work, students have jobs as office helpers, messengers, servers in the cafeteria, busboys, and teacher's assistants. In the co-op program, students work approximately half a day and receive school credit. This is an option popular with students, who tend to be in 12th grade or beyond. Most of the co-op jobs are in fast food restaurants or discount stores. Students in co-op placements are paid at least minimum wage, unless a handicapped voucher has been secured which allows the payment of sub-minimum wage.

The discussion below will detail the two major options for vocational programming open to both mainstreamed and center-based students; those within the special education centers, and those offered at the AVTSs.

Vocational programs at the special education centers:
Within the six special education centers, vocational training is a central part of education. The centers each have a number of vocational workshops, usually large, well-equipped facilities. These are used half a day for training of district-based special education students, and the other half, for the centers own students. These two groups are not taught together, partially because of scheduling, and partially because the district students tend to be on a higher level. The vocational education

teachers at the special centers are certified vocational teachers and courses are modeled after "approved vocational courses". However, the vocational courses of the special centers are not considered approved vocational courses (as are those at the AVTSs) because they do not meet all criteria regarding program content. The special centers also offer "pre-voc" courses for 8th, 9th, and 10th graders. The purpose of the pre-voc program is to introduce the students to the different vocational areas. These courses are typically provided one or two half-days per week.

The areas of vocational training available at the six special education schools are as follows:

The Number of Special Education Centers Offering Each Vocational Training Program (1986/87)

Automotive	4
Building & Grds Maintnce	4
Clerical	4
Construction	4
Distributive Ed	1
Food Production/Services	5
Materials Handling	1
Service Occupations	1
Work Activity Center	6

The WAC programs at the special centers are designed for "low functioning" students who, it is judged are likely to be most suited to WAC placement once they complete school. The goal is to make the transition of these students to adult WAC programming as easy as possible. TMR students are the primary participants in the WACs although other exceptionalities, including EMR, do participate based on this criterion. Not all TMR are in the WAC, as some are considered suitable for higher level programming such as co-op work. There have even been instances when SPMR students have been involved in WAC programs. They do, however, need one-on-one supervision and so are not considered really suited for the program. The WAC coordinator for the AIU would like to see TACs developed for these youngsters. Students often begin working in the WAC for short periods of the day between the ages of 14-16. From 16 to 21, they work there for half a day.

The WAC program focuses on developing the social, personal, and occupational competencies of these students. The program is

planned to reflect adult WAC programs as much as possible. Licensure by the Department of Labor is identical to that of adult WAC programs. Contracts are being procured from many sources and students are paid on a piecework basis. So as to avoid difficulties in terms of SSI payments, wages are labled "student training allowances", rather than payment for work. Work includes assembly, sorting, counting, bagging, and collating. According to the administrator of the program, in-school WACs do not have trouble getting contracts. Because they do not have to bear overhead expenses, such as heat and light, they tend to be very competitive, and can, at times, have more work than they can comfortably handle.

Students in the one mainstreamed TMR program in the county, at Shaler High School, although offered the option of participating in their area's special center WAC, have resisted. Having gained mainstreamed status for their youngsters, families are described as averse to having them return to the centers for any reason.

Programs at the AVTSs: The AVTSs provide a total of 46 different approved vocational courses countywide (see Appendix I for a complete list of AVTS courses provided). Each AVTS offers between 21 and 31 types of courses. Students typically spend five half-days a week, for two years, in an AVTS program.

Both mainstreamed EMR students and center-based students may enroll in half-day vocational programs at the AVTS associated with their school districts. In the fall of 1986, a total of 99 EMR students were enrolled in AVTSs throughout the county. Thirty-five of these students came from special education centers; 64 were mainstreamed students.

MR Students at AVTSs, 1986/7
Mainstreamed and Center-Based

AVT	Center	Mainstreamed	Total
Forbes Road	26	17	43
Steel Center	4	10	14
A. W. Beattie	3	25	28
Parkway West	2	12	14
Total	35	64	99

EMR students were enrolled in 21 of the 45 certified vocational courses offered at the four AVTSs. In order to get an idea of the popularity of the various vocational course subject areas, the table below gives the total MR enrollment in each vocational area across the four AVTSs. The courses are listed from highest to lowest EMR enrollment.

MR Student Enrollment by AVTS Course
AIU: 1986/7

More than 10 MR students enrolled:

Baking
Foods Technology
Materials Handling

5-10 MR students enrolled:

Meat-cutting
Auto-body Technology
Distributive Ed/Marketing

2-4 MR students enrolled

Cook/Chef
Clothing Textiles
Cosmetology
Graphic Arts
Health Assistant
Electrical Occupation
Plumbing
Appliance Repair
Metallurgy

1 MR student enrolled

Auto Mechanics
Business Education
Commercial Art
Data Processing
Masonry
Motel-Restaurant Management

It can be seen from the above table, that, like their counterparts in the Pittsburgh Public Schools, MR students at the AVTSs tend to be clustered in specific course areas, most notably in food-related courses.

MR enrollment at AVTS is reported to be on the increase. The 99 EMR students currently enrolled at AVTSs represent approximately 3% of the AVTSs' countywide enrollment. Traditionally, few handicapped youngsters were involved in AVTS programming, and those that were, tended to be learning disabled rather than mentally retarded. In recent years, however, the number of EMR students enrolled at the AVTSs has increased. This is attributed to the declining general enrollments of the AVTSs, which has resulted in lower entrance requirements, and the implementation of programs that provide supports to all special education students in the form of learning facilitators. Learning facilitators interpret class material for students, modify tests, and, as we saw at A.W. Beattie, provide a resource room for exceptional students where they can study, consult specially designed curriculum aids and take exams. Mentally retarded students may also participate in an additional aspect of vocational programming at the AVTSs, co-op education. Part of their scheduled time at the AVTS may be spent in jobs in the community, for which they are paid. In some vocational areas, this is a prominant part of the program, so that in the second year of their AVTS tenure, students are spending only one half day a week at the facility. The other four half-days are spent in co-op work. Co-op work jobs sometimes lead to permanent jobs once school is completed.

The visit to A.W. Beattie gave us additional insights into AVTS programming for MR students and its future potential. At A.W. Beattie, EMR students may be found in food service, auto body, appliance repair, distributive education and graphics courses. The food service worker course, a popular option for EMR youngsters, was designed specifically for special education students. It is a modified version of the cook/baker program, and has its own teacher. The course in the distributive education (retailing) department, is a pilot program that developed out of the interest of 4 EMR youngsters in this area. A modified curriculum was developed by the regular teacher, in which cashiering was not included as a competency that had to be mastered. These students gain practical experience cashiering by manning the cash registers in the dining room serviced by the cook/baker program. These students may repeat their year in the program next year, after which they would hopefully be placed into co-op jobs in retail settings. The school is waiting to see the results of this program before accepting additional students.

The learning facilitators at Beattie carry out a one year follow-up of their special education students. These are not broken down into exceptionality, so that separating out MR students is not possible. The 64 special education students who graduated from Beattie last year were found to be in the following situations after graduation:

Follow-up of Special Education Graduates:
Beattie Tech '86

	Number	Percent
Employed in a field related to training	24	38
Employed in an unrelated field	10	16
Continuing education in a related field	11	17
Continuing education in an unrelated field	3	5
Military	5	8
Unemployed	2	3
No Information	9	14
Totals	64	101

The 84% of special education graduates who are employed, in continuing education or in the military, compares with 91% of all graduates who are in these situations.

Summary: Vocational education is an extremely important aspect of the educational program of mentally retarded youngsters in both the city and the suburban areas. In certain respects it becomes the most important aspect of programming, especially for students older than 18. Within the city, 70% of EMR students are taking advantage of skill-centered vocational training this year. In the county system, there are a number of ways that a student may take vocational programming: within a mainstreamed high school, at a special center, or at an AVTS. Where a student

goes depends upon parent preference, district emphasis, and programs available. Not all EMR students take advantage of vocational training opportunities, primarily due to family preference as to course schedule or the student's need to concentrate on academic subject to meet requirements for graduation.

MR students tend to be enrolled in certain vocational areas. Food service and fast food are popular training programs because of their intrinsic appeal and the fact that they are those most likely to lead to job opportunities for MR students. In-school work, in the special education centers of the AIU, and co-op work within the community, available in some form throughout the county, provide these youngsters with additional work experience. The liaison program, of the high schools of IU 2, and the learning facilitator program, of the AVTSs of the AIU, are directed toward providing students in vocational courses with non-handicapped peers with additional supports. These take the form of advocacy, interpretation of course content, modification of tests so that emphasis on reading and written skills is decreased, provision of simplified curriculum materials, etc. Vocational training for lower functioning students tends to focus on WAC-type programming. In addition, in the city system, students work in the areas of maintenance, food service and production. Except for some follow-up done at at least one of the AVTSs, the relationship between in-school vocational training and eventual employment once school is completed is not known for the mentally retarded youngsters of Allegheny County.

Discussion and Recommendations

This exploration of the vocational programs of Allegheny County, both in sheltered workshops and at the high school level, leads to a number of conclusions and recommendations. These will be described below.

Sheltered Workshops for the Mentally Retarded

Agencies with sheltered workshops for the mentally retarded are currently facing a number of interrelated issues as has been detailed above. Administrators at these agencies seem very well aware of these issues and tend, in the main, to be seeking ways to resolve them. There appear to be a number of areas which must be dealt with to ensure successful continuation of these programs in the light of current trends. The needs of the community could be best met if workshops could successfully: 1) get more business for workshop clients, while ensuring that therapeutic purposes continue to be met, 2) improve placement of clients into competitive work, 3) provide more places for people in the community who are currently without programming. These three aspects will form the basis of the discussion below. A number of additional points will also be discussed. One of these, the issue of SSI benefits, affects both workshop and high school vocational programming.

1) Increasing business in the workshops. It is clear that a principal means to improvement of workshop operations is to increase the amount of paid work available. With sufficient work on a reliable basis, issues of payment of clients for time spent in the facility, down time and client lay-offs would be resolved. Were the day ever reached when agencies could pick and choose the contracts they would accept, they could ensure that clients had meaningful, therapeutic work with adequate pay. As Parc-way describes it, workshops that are totally "job-driven" are the ultimate goal.

Agencies single out obtaining sufficient business as the most difficult challenge they have to meet. A number of

different strategies are being attempted. Goodwill seeks businesses who will subcontract with the workshop for such services as collating, assembling, sorting, printing and binding. Parc-way has identified certain products it feels that can produce and for which a market exists; wooden pallets, electronic cable and harness assemblies, and case stitching. The Parc-way approach has the advantages of providing consistent work, so that an individual can learn specific tasks and improve skills. Also, the tasks learned are more transferable to paid jobs in the real world. The newly-formed Pittsburgh Sheltered Workshop Association will begin a joint effort to obtain business for its individual members. The methods used should be closely monitored as to their effectiveness.

Given today's business climate, a strong grounding in management and marketing techniques is apt to prove a considerable advantage in the successful administration of a workshop facility. Workshops are apt to require considerable business acumen on the part of their administrators to obtain additional business and promote effective management.

As indicated by the former head of Parc-way, whose background includes both rehabilitation and business training, management techniques can also be used to promote rehabilitative goals. By keeping an eye on distribution of earnings in the workshop, he was able to develop methods to encourage parity in this aspect. Plant managers were required to report distribution of earnings of all clients and to account for inequalities. They therefore began to work toward more equal assignment of paid work, perhaps working against a natural tendency to assign more hours to the most interested clients and/or the best producers. It appears that rehabilition may be better promoted by instituting some hard measures than by being left to good intentions.

Because of their importance to both marketing and rehabilitation efforts, ways to increase the business expertise of workshop management should be explored. These individuals tend to come out of a social service tradition and may not be cognizant of business techniques. Use of the expertise of the agency's board is very important in this respect. Technical assistance on business aspects of workshop operations might be considered. The general applicability of business techniques to social service agencies; their potential importance for an agency's survivial at times, makes the inclusion of business courses in social service administration curricula a consideration. The feasiblity and desirability of joint business/social administration programs, such as an M.S.W./M.B.A., might also be considered toward this end.

2) Improving placement of clients into competitive work. Both Goodwill and Parc-way are currently making serious efforts to increase the number of clients being placed in competitive work situations. Although both agencies are interested in the supported work concept which involves on-the-job training coupled with supports, neither seems to feel that supported work will supplant workshops. Although in some states, notably Massachusetts, the number of workshops that have been closed because of clients being placed on jobs is considered a sign of progress, local agencies do not seem to perceive this as an either-or situation. Although they are attempting to place people on jobs, they fully expect that, at least for the foreseeable future, there will be people for whom workshop programming is the highest level they can achieve.

Placement figures at this time are low, and movement out of the workshop is not considerable. The present workshop clients have been there on the average of eight years. Each agency cites a number of factors as obstacles to increasing placement. Goodwill describes difficulty in developing jobs, of convincing employers to make a place for a mentally retarded individual. Parc-way feels that getting job openings is not a problem; that paucity of job supervisors is what's limiting placement. Both agencies cite parent and client lack of motivation to move out of the workshop as an issue.

If becomes clear that placement efforts and outcomes need to be carefully monitored. Since the supported work concept, with its attendent job coach/work supervisor aspect is seen by both agencies as the most effecive placement technique and the wave of the future, this should be carefully observed, in terms of both local and national efforts. Does supported work result in permanent jobs for individuals who otherwise could not be placed? How long do job coaches/work supervisors tend to remain on the job? An important aspect to be monitored is cost. If it can be shown that such an approach does enable mentally retarded individuals to work who otherwise would not be employable, is this approach cost-effective? These are all important questions. As the field of supported work is just beginning, especially in terms of local efforts, it should be carefully monitored to determine its future use as placment tool.

Another new aspect of placement that appears effective is the by-passing of the continuum concept. A number of recent efforts have moved away from a predetermined sense of specific levels of programming that an individual must pass through before he or she can be considered for placement. At Parc-way, they are

attempting to interest individuals from the waiting list in supported employment by contacting them directly. The Recent Grads Program in which both agencies are involved, appears specifically to circumvent the continuum approach. These youngsters, recently completing their educations, are placed into the programming that seems to fit their particular needs and abilities, rather than uniformly being assigned to a beginning level.

Since new approaches to placement are being currently implemented, amassing knowledge on the subject of placement is very important. The more that is known, the more effective placement techniques are apt to be. It would be useful to work toward an effective triage system; getting a sense of the characteristics of people that are best suited to different kinds of job situations, who best belongs where. To make such progress, it becomes critical to do careful follow-up, and to document and disseminate procedures and their outcomes. (Who was placed where, using what methods, and how well did it work?)

3) Providing more places for people in the community who are currently without programming. The numbers of people in the community who are not in any program are estimated to be considerable, although not specifically known. Both Goodwill and Parc-way have substantial waiting lists. A number of ways to increase the number of workshop places come to mind:

- Increasing the number of clients placed out of workshops

- Better utilization of current places. Parc-way keeps an eye on utilization and speaks to those individuals who are not making full use of their place. The agency keeps track of the relationship of attendance to capacity to get a sense of utilization rate. Those individuals who are enrolled in the programs but are attending infrequently are counseled to make better use of their slots. If they are not interested in doing so, another individual can. This approach could be expanded to other workshops.

- More work. Goodwill mentioned the issue of the awkward position of filling slots in a time of little work. If a place becomes available but there is no work, do you fill the place, so that the newly involved client's immediate involvement with the agency may be to be laid off? In addition, were substantial work available, it is probable that the workshops could increase the number of clients that they are able to serve.

- Increasing options for elderly mentally retarded clients. As was discussed above, one of the problems of movement out of the workshops is that older clients remain in the shops for want

of alternative programming. Developing suitable programming for elderly MR clients that would allow them to move out of the workshops, to "retire", would open up places for younger individuals. It has been noted that regular senior center clientele are not responsive to efforts to integrate MR individuals into their programs. An alternative that might be explored is Adult Day Care programming. In a recent survey of the ADC programs of Allegheny County, of 18 centers, 8 were found to currently include some MR clients. Of the 11 that did not have MR clients at present, 8 of the programs felt that inclusion of MR clients was feasible.

- Opening additional workshops. This would depend upon interest in developing such programs, and sufficient business to support them.

4) Fostering communication and consultation between workshops. The facilitation of communication and consultation between workshops should be encouraged. Workshops are currently facing much the same problems in regards to marketing, placement, down time, programming, etc. More effective solutions are liable to be reached using imput from a number of programs, based on larger numbers of clients. There exists also, the potential of working together for change on issues that affect all of them, i.e. lobbying for unions to accept handicapped members. Perhaps the establishment of the PSWA can be used as a precedent for this and it can serve as a beginning forum for further interaction. Clearly the issue of competition is an obstacle to effective communication; solutions won't be shared if agencies feel that this will worsen their position vis-a-vis one another. Perhaps the market study showing that only 15% of workshop business is competitive can be taken to heart. The realization that all workshops will ultimately profit if better solutions to these issues are worked out, and that increased public awareness of the concept of workshops will ultimately mean more business for everyone, may act to lessen the devisive effects of perceived competition.

5) The issue of SSI benefits. The issue of SSI benefits to MR individuals affects both workshop and school vocational programming. Whenever payment is an aspect of programming, families worry about the potential for SSI benefits being reduced or cut-off, and seek to lower the amount of wages received by their youngsters. Workshop and high school programs tend to be constantly involved with this issue and will at times keep on eye on individual client earnings to ensure that a person does not go above the limit. If the client approaches that limit, hours of

paid work tend to be reduced. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that it is often not possible to obtain clear guidelines as to amount of earnings permitted before reduction or cut-off of SSI payments. It is felt however, that once an individual is cut-off, reinstatement is difficult and parents tend to avoid situations that they perceive will endanger their youngster's status. It is clear that, even when circumstances do not endanger the status quo, the perception that there may be a problem serves as a disincentive to full employment for some youngsters. Some families request that their adult sons and daughters work part-time only, so that there will be no chance that their SSI benefits will be put in jeopardy. Clients in the workshops, where individuals are paid on a piece-work basis have been overheard to say, "Don't work so fast, you'll lose your SSI." Clearly, the issue of SSI works as a disincentive for individuals' realization of their potential in terms of full employment at the highest levels of which they are capable. The SSI benefit structure needs to be further examined, clearly delineated for the benefit of clients, families and service personnel, and, perhaps, reformulated so as to encourage, rather than discourage, client development.

High School Vocational Programs for the Mentally Retarded

Vocational programs are an important aspect of high school programming for mentally retrded youth in Allegheny County. Efforts have been made in recent years that support these students in their vocational education, especially those mandated by the Carl Perkins Act, which lead to the development of Project Liaison in Pittsburgh Public Schools and learning facilitators in the AVTSs of the AIU. A number of recommendations are suggested in respect to improving the vocational educational of mentally retarded high school students. These are directed towards increasing the numbers of students involved in such programming, and improving the effectiveness of vocational programming in terms of leading to post-school paid employement.

1) Increasing the numbers of mentally retarded students taking vocational courses. The present systems work with those students who have an interest in taking vocational education, and whose schedules permit them to include these courses. The question remains whether more could be done to both encourage interest in these courses and facilitate scheduling so that greater numbers of students would participate. It might be

possible to make additional efforts to educate parents and students as to the benefits of vocational education. (This could be made more compelling by evidence that such courses lead to satisfactory employment, which would require follow-up, an aspect to be described below.) Sufficient room in students' schedules depends largely on satisfactory completion of academic requirements. When students' records include courses failed, which must be repeated, there is often no room for vocational programming. One of the liaison counselors in a city high school pointed out that both summer school and Letsche, the city's alternative high school, make no provision for special education. Mentally retarded students' only option for making up required credits is to take courses during the traditional school year. A system in which MR students could make up academic courses in summer school would potentially lead to greater numbers enrolling in vocational courses.

A factor in the AIU system that limits participation in vocational courses is that much of the vocational programming takes place at the special educational centers. To some families at least, the stigma attached to the centers makes them an untenable alternative for any programming. Many of these youngsters, presumably, faced with the alternative of vocational courses at their level at the centers, and unsuitable vocational programming at their home schools, choose not to become involved in vocational programming of any kind. (Again, it should be remembered that this report did not cover vocational programming at district high schools for mainstreamed MR students. We do not know the extent to which these students are involved in such programming.) Ways to make vocational courses at the centers a more attractive alternative might be considered. Gladys Fox has suggested that younger students, for whom mainstreaming is taken for granted, may seen the centers in a more neutral light and they may not serve the same disincentive function as for present cohorts of students. It was noted these centers, built to serve considerably larger numbers of children than are enrolled at present, are currently underutilized. Ways to better use these facilities, especially their considerable vocational shops, might be considered. One of these might involve the development of unique vocational courses open to both handicapped and non-handicapped students. In order to avoid direct competition with the AVTSs, course areas could be those not covered in AVTSs or could be geared to a somewhat lower level, perhaps serving as introductory experiences. Such courses might prove attractive, viable options to mainstreamed MR students.

2) Developing additional course areas especially suited to MR students. Another way to make the voc ed system more attractive to MR students is to increase the

suitability of courses offered. This can be approached in a number of ways. First, of all, the attractiveness of fast foods courses to MR students was noted by many spokespersons in the system. Courses in this area were cited as being appealing to these students because they involved food, and as being likely to lead to job opportunities in the community. These individuals therefore suggested that additional openings in fast food courses be made available to MR students. In terms of the Pittsburgh Public Schools, it was proposed that fast foods programs be offered in every high school in the city, in sufficent numbers to meet demand. This would mean that a number of high schools would have to develop fast foods programs, while others would have to expand an existing program to include additional class periods. With the current rule specifying that only 6 special education students be permitted per course, only limited numbers of MR students can take fast foods at those schools which have a program in this area. At Peabody, for example, the current 3 periods of fast foods allow for only 18 special education students, a number considerably below the demand, as noted by the Liaison Counselor.

An additional possibility involves the development of new course areas chosen specifically for their likelihood to lead to jobs for MR. Selection of suitable course areas could be based on an investigation of the areas in which MR individuals are being currently trained in post-school programs and those in which placement departments are currently placing MR individuals. Such possibilities as custodial/maintenance, nurse's aide/companion, concentrated sewing, and clothes cleaning/mending were mentioned by liaison counselors as such possibilities. In addition to starting courses in new areas, modification of existing courses to create vocational training opportunities suitable for MR students was suggested. For example, carpenter's helper or construction helper courses developed out of the main courses in these areas were indicated. A precedent is seen for this in the modified distributive ed course being tested at A.W. Beattie, in which specific competencies were eliminated from the curriculum. The modified courses would rely more on "hands on' experience than written work, and allow students to be trained in these areas, within specified limits. Another question which might be explored when considering special course areas for MR students, is the feasibility of developing TAC programming for severely retarded (SPMR) students, a possibility raised by the WAC coordinator of the AIU.

An issue remains regarding teachers who are currently reluctant to accept MR students or modify course materials to permit their participation, effectively closing those courses to these youngsters. The degree to which these teachers could be

encouraged (or mandated) to do so, thereby opening their courses, should be explored. (Alternatively, it might be decided that certain vocational areas require a level of technical expertise that put them beyond the reach of MR students, so that special efforts to open up these areas would not be made. This decision, however, should be based on a consideration of course content, not teacher attitude.)

An additional question arises as to ways to increase the use of vocational training opportunities at AVTSs by MR students. There are indications that efforts toward this are already happening, that as AVTS enrollments have gone down, they are more amenable to developing special courses, or making modifications in existing courses to attract special education students. At the AVTS we visited, it was noted that whereas a few years ago MR youngsters participated only in the specially-designed food service worker course, they now are taking advantage of increasing course options with the cooperation of teachers involved. The vocational teachers who had mentally retarded students in their classes spoke positively of the experience and their involvement. They appeared exceptionally amenable to working with these students and the learning facilitators, to ensure that the students' involvement was successful. The learning facilitator interviewed mentioned that A.W. Beattie has a TMR student this year, and suggested that ways to increase the numbers of TMR students at the AVTSs be explored. It should be recalled that A. W. Beattie was selected for special programs for MR youngsters and was the only AVTS visited. Whether the receptiveness to these students and interest in modifying programs is generally true of the AVTS system is not known.

Increasing the involvement of MR youngsters in the AVTS system appears to be a way to enlarge their options for vocational training. The AVTSs have traditionally been regarded as a way for students in general to pursue serious vocational interests, and this could be true also for MR youngsters. The successful experience of MR students in AVTS programs could be more widely publicized (they take this experience back to their school districts or centers) to encourage more special education students to take advantage of this option. Also, the continuation of the efforts of learning facilitators and vocational teachers to develop courses specifically with the needs of these youngsters in mind should be encouraged, and publicized so that parents, students and home district teachers know of these options. In addition, the experience with developing specially tailored programs should be more widely shared so that vocational training programs around the county can profit from the experience and learn of viable options.

3) Undertaking follow-up to determine the effect of high school-level vocational training on adult careers. A critical area that has not been generally studied is the degree to which vocational training taken in high school effects the work lives of mentally retarded students. Does vocational training make a difference to their careers? How likely is it that someone taking a particular vocational course actually gets a job in that field? What percent of students remain in the vocational areas in which they received training, either by continuing their training in the field, or obtaining a related job? Do these courses make a difference in the long run in terms of career? Do these courses teach generic work skills that could not be taught other ways - punctuality, responsiblity, etc?

In conducting such follow-up, the careers of students who had taken particular vocational courses would be followed, and the relationship between courses taken and post-school training and jobs would be determined. An important aspect of this would be determining which vocational areas were more closely related to post-school success in obtaining a job.

With the recent emphasis on supported work with its inherent concept of on-the-job training, rather than training previous to work, a critical question for such a study is whether someone who has taken a vocational course in high school is better equipped (or more likely to be hired) for a job in that area than someone who is placed in such a job for the first time as an adult and is trained on the job. For example, does someone who has taken fast foods in high school have an advantage at McDonald's over someone placed there in a supported work program such as McJobs run by Goodwill? Again, this is directed at finding out the extent to which the high school vocational programs have an impact on later job success.

The findings of a follow-up study would have implications both for administrators attempting to plan effective vocational programming and for counselors, teachers, parents and students attempting to create high school careers for particular youngsters that optimally prepare them for adult life. If these courses don't make a difference in eventual careers, their basic purpose should be considered - is it primarily to keep these youngsters in school, by giving them a subject in which they can experience a degree of success? Should that be true, that may be a perfectly acceptable alternative, but it suggests that other possibilities might be considered that serve the same purpose. It may make sense to think of alternative ways to keep students in school and teach them useful material. (i.e. If vocational programming doesn't make a difference to eventual career, there

may be no reason to steer a student to a vocational course rather than, for example, an elective course in art or music.) If it can be demonstrated that vocational programming makes a difference in eventual career, this becomes a major selling point to prospective students and their families considering enrolling in vocational courses. This, of course, would be especially true for courses which were shown to be most effective.

APPENDIX I

OVT COURSES OFFERED THROUGH THE PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, 1986

Accounting
Air Conditioning and Refrigeration
Auto Body Technology
Auto Mechanic Technology
Baking
Business Computer Applications
Business Education (Marketing Etc.)
Business/Office Management
Cabinetry
Carpentry
Child Care/Guidance
Civil Technology
Clothing/Textiles
Commercial Art
Commercial Baking
Cosmetology
Data Processing
Dental Assistant Technology
Distributive Education
Drafting and Design
Electrical Occupation
Electronics
Fashions/Clothing Specialist
Fast Food
Foods Technology
Geriatric/Homemaker Health Aid
Graphic Arts
Health Assistant
Laundry/Dry Cleaning
Machinist Technology
Masonry
Office Automation/Procedures
Plumbing
Printing
Radio/TV
Research Laboratroy Assistant
Secretarial/Stenographic
Small Engine Repair
Welding
Word Processing

COURSES OFFERED THROUGH THE AVTSs
IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY, 1986

Accounting
Appliance Repair
Air Conditioning/Heating
Air Conditioning/Refrigeration
Air Craft Maintenance
Architectural Design Technology
Auto Body Technology
Auto Mechanic Technology
Baking
Building Trades-Maintenance
Business Education (Marketing, Etc.)
Carpentry
Chemical Technology
Child Care/Guidance
Civil Construction Technology
Clothing/Textiles
Cook Chef
Commercial Art
Cosmetology
Data Processing
Dental Assistant Technology
Distributive Education
Drafting and Design
Ecology
Electrical Occupation
Electronics
Foods Technology
Graphic Arts
Health Assistant
Heavy Equipment Operation
Hydraulics/Fluid Power
Machinist Technology
Masonry
Material Handling
Meat Cutting
Medical Laboratory Assistant
Medical Assistant
Metal Fabrication
Metallurgy
Motel-Restaurant Management
Nuclear Micro Biology
Plumbing
Secretarial/Stenographic
Waiter/Waitress
Welding
Word Processing

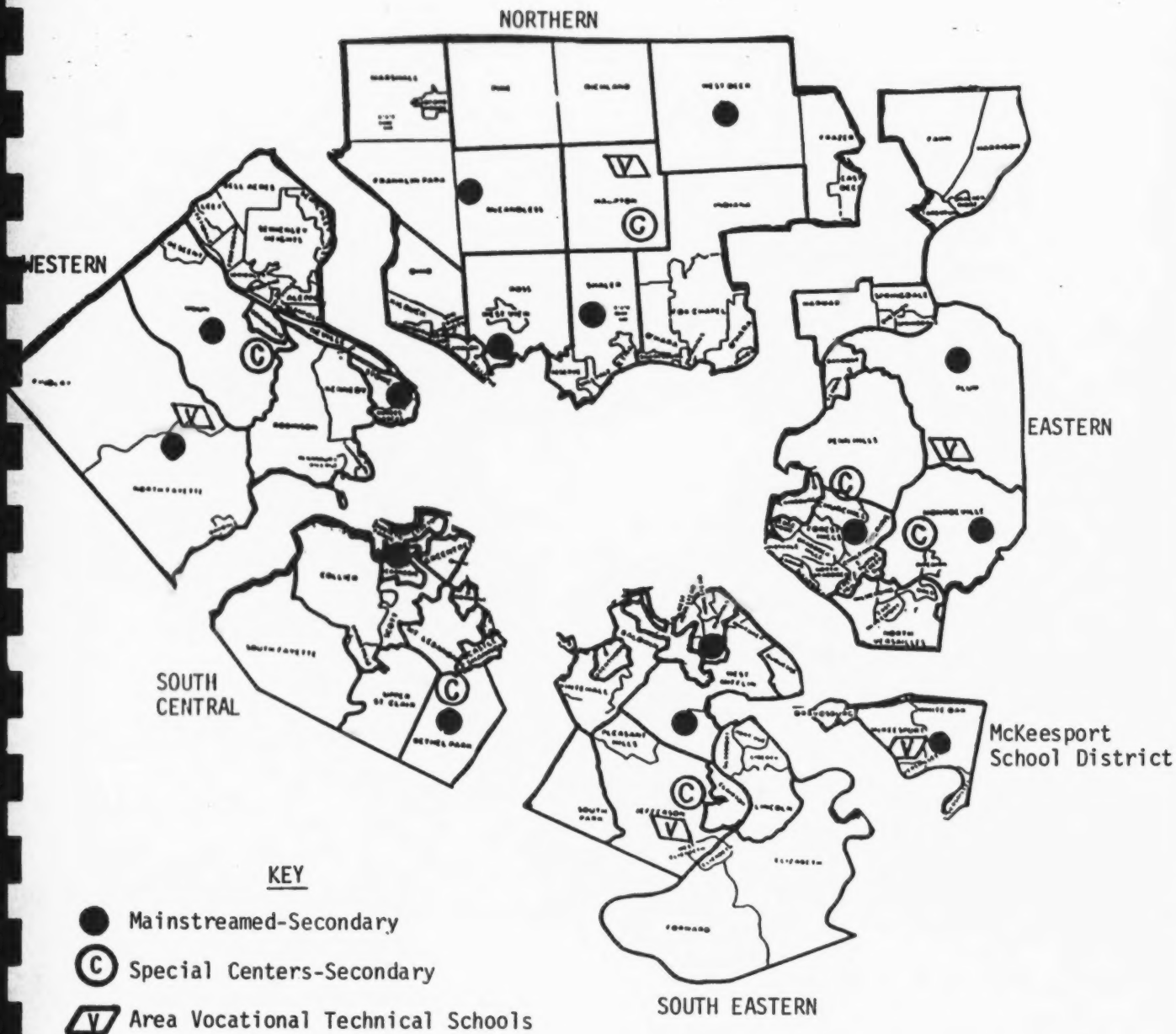
APPENDIX II

Public School Facilities with Programs for Mentally Retarded High School Students in Allegheny County (outside City of Pittsburgh), 1986

Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU) Divisions	School Districts with Mainstreamed EMR High School Classes		Special Education Centers	Area Vocational-Technical Schools
	AIU - Auspices	District Auspices		
Northern:	Deer Lakes North Allegheny Northgate	None	Middle Road	A. W. Beattie
Eastern:	East Allegheny Gateway * Plum Borough * Woodland Hills	Penn Hills Wilkinsburg * Plum Borough * Highlands	Eastern Area Sunrise	Forbes Road
South Eastern:	Steel Valley West Mifflin	Baldwin-Whitehall McKeesport	Mon Valley Secondary Sunrise	Steel Center
South Central:	Bethel Park Carlynton	None	Pathfinder	Parkway West
Western:	Moon Sto-Rox West Allegheny	None	Western Hills	Parkway West

*Both AIU and district auspices EMR high school classrooms.

Academic and Vocational Education
Sites for MR Secondary Students,
by AIU Division in Allegheny
County, 1986



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